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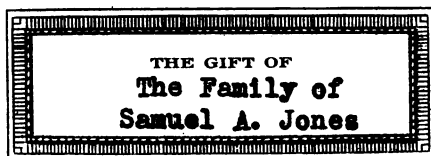
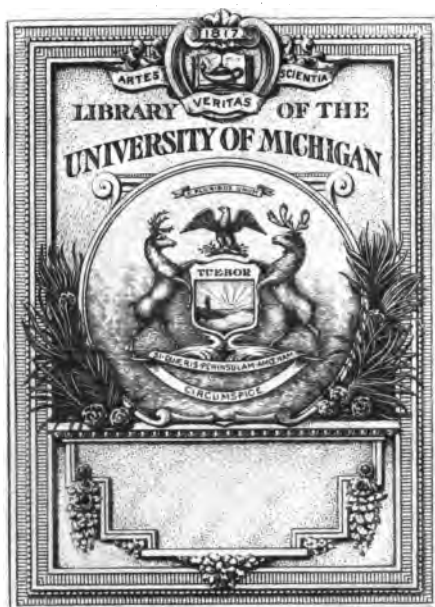
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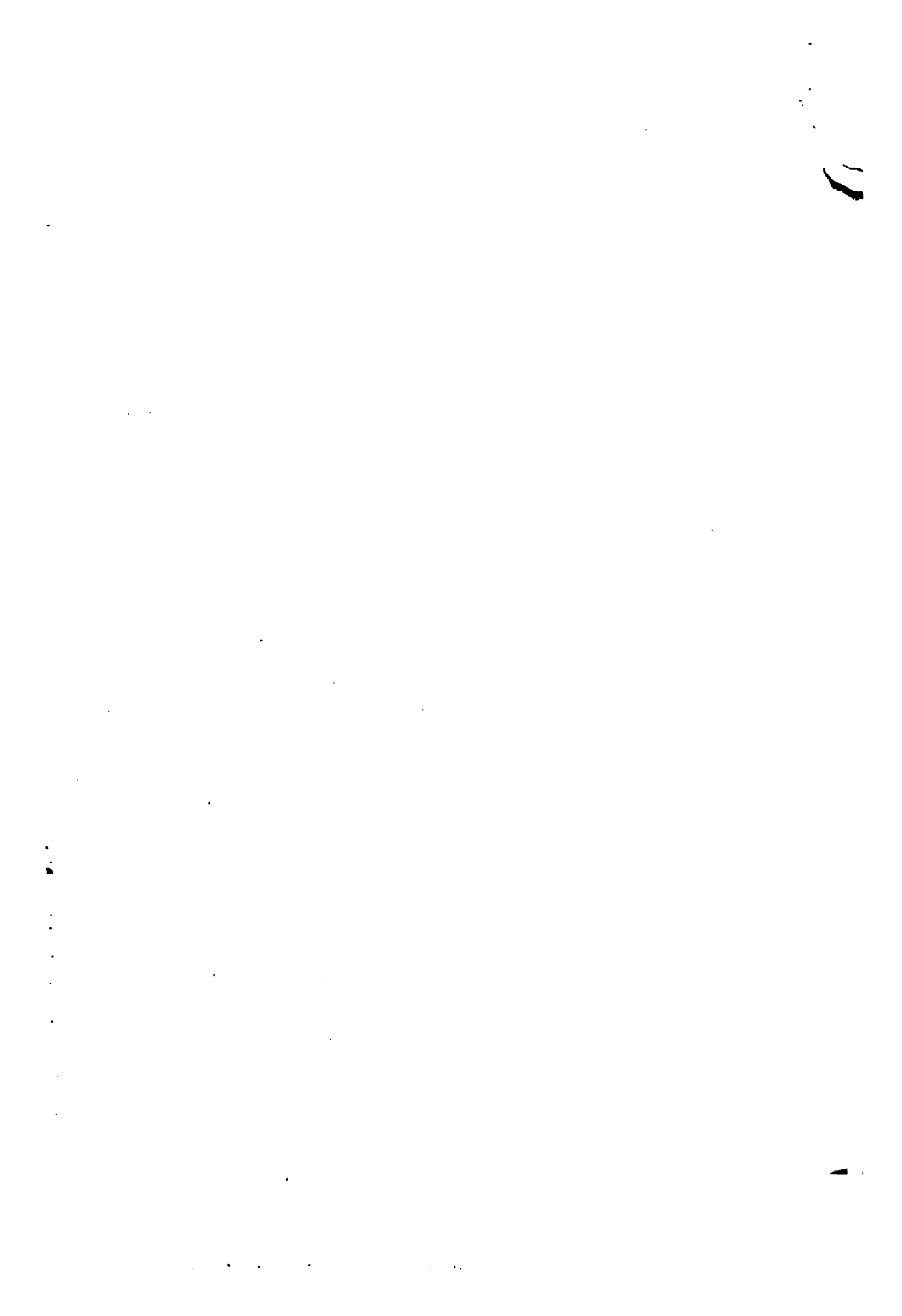
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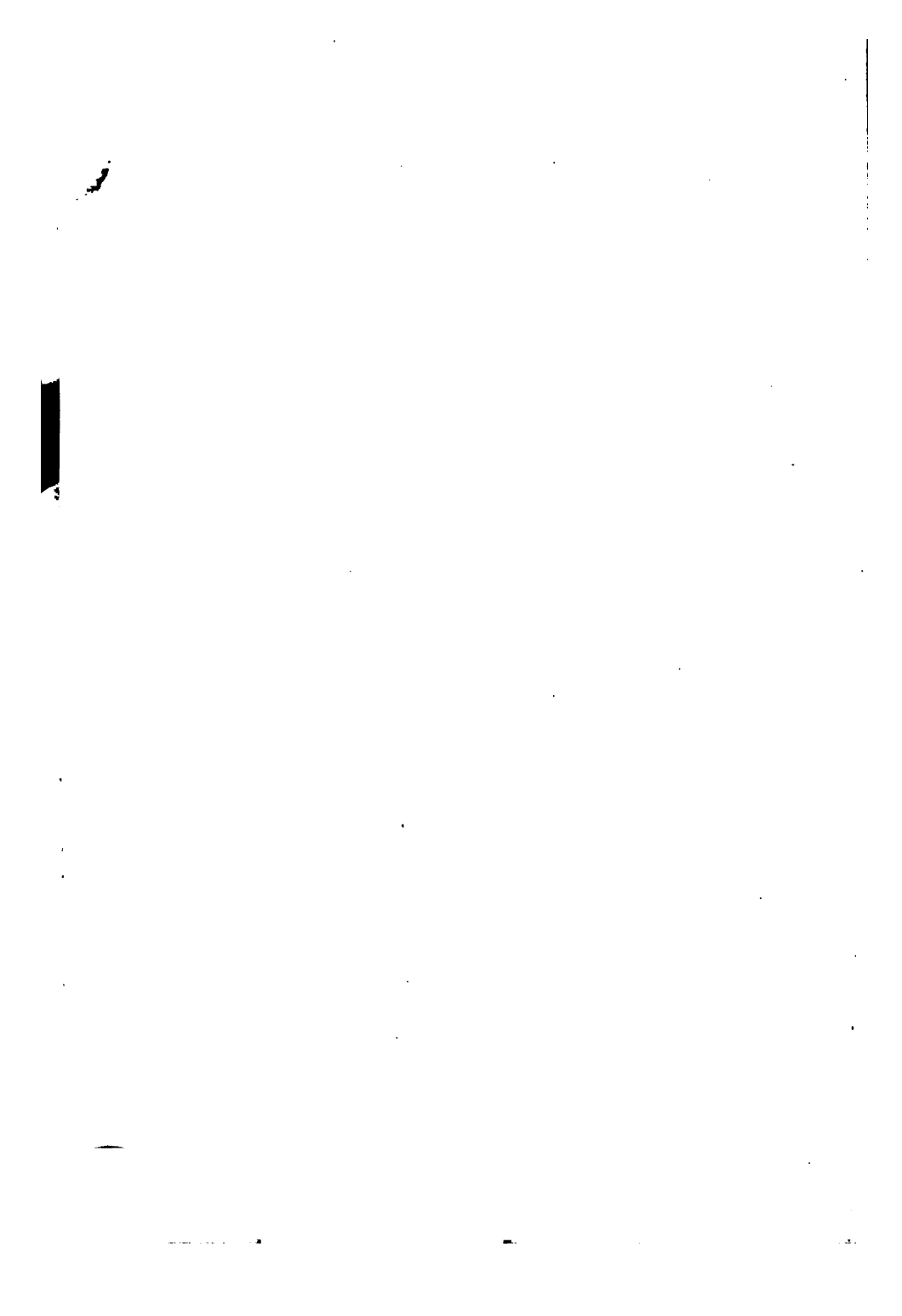
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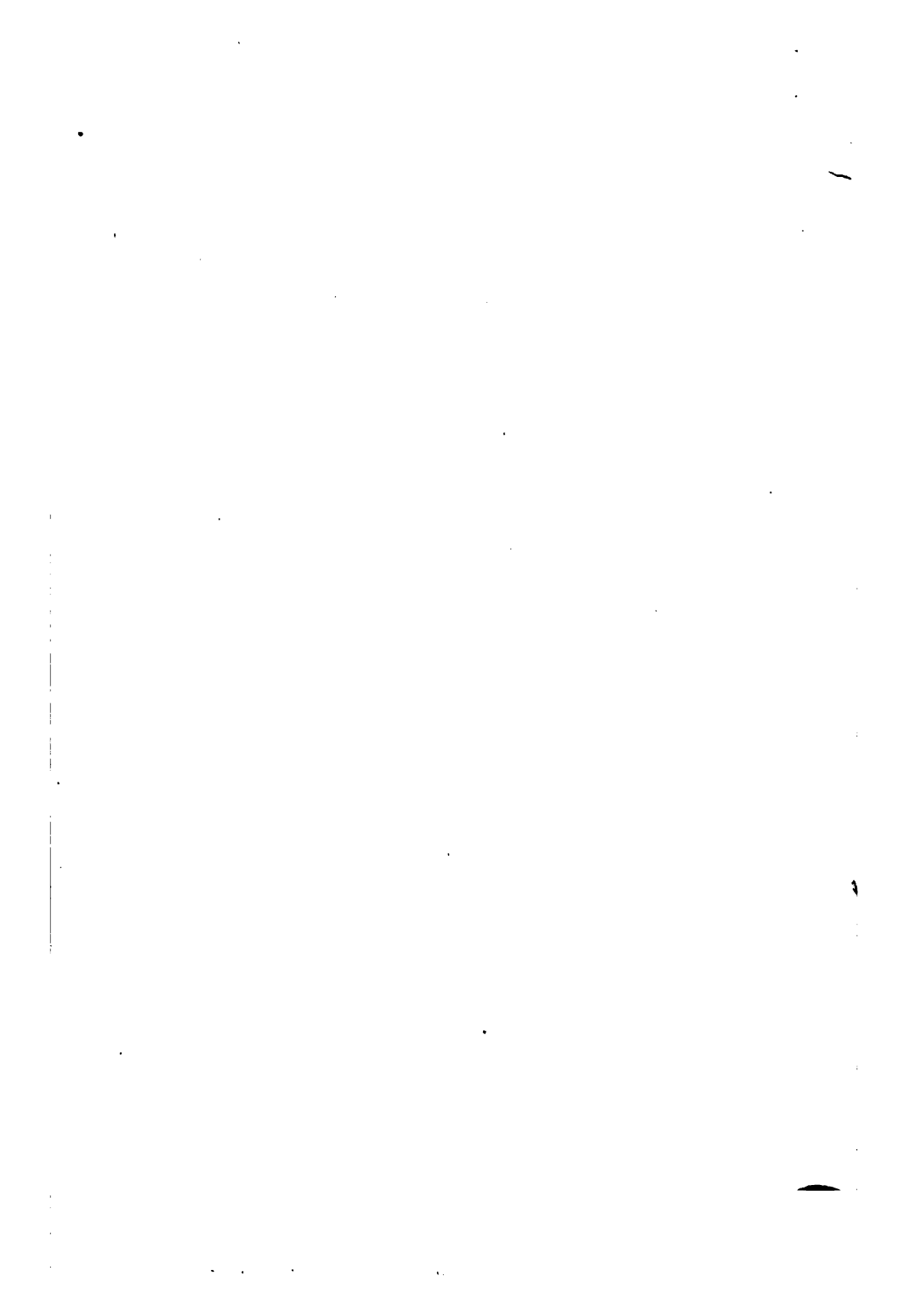
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SONGS OF THE PRESS

AND OTHER ADVENTURES
IN VERSE

BY
BAILEY MILLARD



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ELDER & SHEPARD
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The Murdock Press

Gift of the family of
Samuel R. Jones
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*To where you, patient in your pain,
Are lying, O dear one of mine,
I send these songs born of a brain
And voice not tuned to airs divine.
It seems a deed of unblest birth,
This placing these in your blest hand,
They are so sealed in sad unworth,
But, Mother, you will understand.*



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SONGS OF THE PRESS

THE SONG OF THE PRESS.

For the lumbering locomotive on the run
A deep respect and deference I confess,
But a fuller admiration greets the wild and free
gyration
Of the thousand rolling wonders of the press,
Of the press,
Oh, the wonders and the thunders of the press!

To the giant that unceasing turns the screw
Of a great Atlantic liner I address
A certain strained devotion while it fights the bluff old
ocean,
But 'tis nothing to my reverence for the press,
For the press,
To my dumb and blind affection for the press.

See the league-long web of paper flying free;
See the glistening ink-black rollers pressing tight
To the plates whereon the letters are fast bound in
molten fetters,
Letters telling tales of human wrong and right,
Wrong and right,
With a beatific bending to the right.

THE SONG OF THE PRESS.

When the cylinders are humming like the wind
And the paper spindle's whizzing through its stays,
When the darting tapes are guiding sheets in sight and
sheets in hiding,
Then your comprehension's tangled in the maze,
In the maze,
In the mighty, heaving, whirring, burring maze.

When the printed papers down the formers glide,
When the whipping folders whisk them through the
lane
And by fifties out they flutter through the ever-flowing
gutter,
There's the fullest sense of garner and of gain,
Precious gain,
A most satisfying, gratifying gain.

For here the work is finished that began
Over mountains, over seas before the light
Shone upon the local center where a people's zealous
mentor
Rounded out a day of labor in the night,
In the night;
Oh, the long, long day of labor and the night!

All completed, all accomplished is the toil
In the service of the great minds and the less;

THE SONG OF THE PRESS.

Now, arising grand before us in a sweeping, swelling
chorus,

Hear the diapason boomings of the press,
Of the press,

And the full-toned *vox humana* of the press:

"Of the mighty ones of Cosmos I was born,
Of the labor and the will that ride the earth;
In their energy kinetic hear you not the cry prophetic,
'Here is scientific wonder at its birth' ?
I am but a trumpet flourish for the works of greater
worth,

Nobler worth,
For more glorious, more noble works of worth.

"I am looking, I am looking to the light
That is spreading in its high auroral curve;
Whether God-made, whether man-made, I am but the
humble handmaid
Of the people, and the people I would serve,
I would serve,
For the highest of all missions is to serve."

THE MARTYRS OF THE ART ROOM.

THE MARTYRS OF THE ART ROOM.

I COME not with bold hexameters to batter down the
idols
Of a picture-minded people who love "art" as they
love dress,
For my voice is weak and fluttering when into song it
sidles
And you will find it ever kind to artists of the press.

I know of the afflictions that beset the black-and-whiter
Who may never choose his subject and who draws
what he is told:
I know his load is heavy, with no hope of getting
lighter,
And reward is not forthcoming, little glory, little
gold.

It is sad to see him taking orders from a layman making
Up his schedule for a full-page illustration for the
"sup,"
With a feeling for the values that would shame a
drunken drayman
Or the keeper of the kennels where you buy a collie
pup.

THE MARTYRS OF THE ART ROOM.

Sadder still to see him stretching out to fill two noble
pages

A most wonderful designing of the editorial mind
For a holiday edition which the grave and solemn sages
Have for weeks and weeks been planning to astonish
all mankind.

Sadder yet to note the frowning brow with which he
greeted the paper

When he sees his best lines battered and his stipple
clogged with mud,
And a weird smirk on the lady who has cut the latest
caper

In divorces, then his eyeballs are afloat with angry
blood.

"They have routed off her lashes, they have smudged
her alabaster

Neck and chin with sticky dope. It's all the same,
Whether good or bad the drawing, it is sure to meet
disaster;

And down there in that left corner, oh, why did I
sign my name?

"They have etched that battle picture so it's eaten up
by acid,

And the lines are full of nightmare and the whites
are a disgrace,

THE MARTYRS OF THE ART ROOM.

And that asinine plate-nailer, with his donkey smile so
placid,
Has let his curséd hammer fall upon my poor
girl's face."

But although the black-and-whiters can relieve their
hearts by curses,
The despairing color-workers have no language to
address
To the subject of their torments, and I may not in
these verses
Sing the sad lay of the martyrs of the modern color
press!

THE STAR WRITER.

THE STAR WRITER;

OR, "THE SKATE'S" LAMENT.

I BRING in a great sensation, that is worth, on honor
solemn,

More than any other story in the batch,
And the brainless copy butchers cut it down to half-a-
column,

But *his* rot they rattle up without a scratch.

Oh, the star, oh, the star,

Oh, the shining, shining star!

They print all the senseless stuff that he can hatch.

He's a faker of the rawest, I can swear on twenty
Bibles,

And they know it, but they laugh at honest me.

It will take a dozen lawyer men to patch up half his
libels

And each one of them will charge a whopping fee.

Oh, the star, oh, the star,

Oh, the high-priced, low-iced star!

You may have him if you wish for him, but none of
him for me.

THE STAR WRITER.

With dry wine he heats his liver and he smokes two-
for-a-quarter ;

Beer and stogies are the best that I afford ;
And he calls himself a journalist, while I'm a plain
reporter,

And to see his style you 'd take him for a lord.

Oh, the star, oh, the star,

Oh, the high and mighty star !

He deems himself no lower than a lord.

He gets all the soft assignments, while they put me on
the tough ones,

For they know that I can dig and get the nub
Of a story he 'd fall down upon, and while I fight the
rough ones,

He is lolling on the sofa at his club.

Oh, the star, oh, the star,

Oh, the shining, shirking star !

Yes, perhaps he's playing poker at his club.

He is sent off to do yachting, he is detailed for
conventions,

And he loafs at watering-places and the like,
And the paper never questions his most bald and crude
inventions.

It's enough to make a truthful writer strike.

Oh, the star, oh, the star,

Oh, the incandescent star !

How he shines at watering-places and the like !

THE STAR WRITER.

They let him sign his scroll-work and it swells him
like a bladder,
And he thinks that he's a genius on the write;
But when you come to merit he's not three rounds up
the ladder;
For he could n't smell a story if 't was near enough
to bite.
Oh, the star, oh, the star,
Oh, the overrated star!
And they give him my best copy to rewrite!

There are men in every station traveling on their
reputation,
But at that game he can give 'em cards and spades;
He will fall down on a story without any hesitation,
And still keep on a-shining, for his glory never
fades.
Oh, the star, oh, the star,
Oh, the empty-headed star!
He has nothing but his halo, and that never, never
fades.

THE LAMORE SCOOP.

THE LAMORE SCOOP.

"TRAIN robbed at Lamore," came the message,
And it made me spring out of my chair.
We were just closing up our edition
And there was n't a clock-tick to spare.
I fired to Lamore a rush lightning,
And waited with fingers in hair.

"Three miles south," swift came back the answer,
"Nobody to go for you now."
"But our correspondent?" I queried.
"Died Monday." "Will you go?" "Yes; how?"
"Hire engine," "None ready." "Ride horse then,
Or bicycle, jackass, or cow!"

"All right," was replied, "but it's raining,
And I'll charge you a dollar an hour."
"Call it ten if you rush in the story,"
And I sat back with countenance sour,
For of all the blest dough-heads and asses
Here surely was flower of the flower.

THE LAMORE SCOOP.

We waited and waited near press-time;
The minutes were nuggets of gold.
But at last the old telegraph rattled
And the fool at Lamore slowly told:
"Nothing in it; 't was only a hot box;
That robbery story don't hold."

But a tip came from Goshen—they knew it,
And the *Times* men had covered it well.
'T was a scoop and a big one, I gathered,
And the man at Lamore was a sell.
I'm afraid that some pretty strong language
From my lips at that moment there fell.

My call upon Goshen was frantic:
"Send the robbery—rush it, d. q."
"Nothing definite known at this office,"
Came swiftly to add to my rue,
And I pranced 'round the shop like a demon
With ten thousand imps to subdue.

In a moment the sounder was clicking,
And I read it all off in a flash:
"Have you got the train robbery covered?"
It asked with its dot and its dash—
Lamore date. Again that fool rustic,
Or some other dolt just as brash?

THE LAMORE SCOOP.

No! Glory! 'T was our girl reporter,
Who chanced to be there on the train.
"Filed two thousand words on a hazard,"
She wired, and my joy was insane.
The treasure, the darling, the angel;
She had run all the way in the rain!

Her story was graphic and simple,
Not one little sentence awry.
The robbers had captured a fortune,
But 't was one thief's misfortune to die,
And a brakeman was shot in the stomach
And the end of his braking was nigh.

We hustled the stuff as it came in,
And I gloated in triumph to see
That the story was full and well-rounded,
Just as every good story should be.
At the tail of it—there my heart fluttered—
I saw her "Good night. Jessie B."

We beat the whole town with the story.
The *Times* had enough for a sign
And a small head, with laughable figures,
While the *World* had n't even a line.
'T was the very best beat of the whole year,
But hers was the triumph, not mine.

THE LAMORE SCOOP.

They may cry down the newspaper women,
They may tell them to go home and sew,
They may preach and pray over and scold them,
But for this girl reporter I know
That rather than lose her forever
We 'd let any staff man of them go.

AT THE CITY DESK.

AT THE CITY DESK.

It's a wonder that dear manager has left a man for
local;
He has sent out all my writers on his foolish, fancy
schemes;
There's a rattling double murder and I need good
men to poke all
Over town to get the story, but he has to dream his
dreams.

That sensational elopement of the rich girl and her
lover
Needs a half-a-page and pictures, but it's little that
he cares
For he won't wake up till press time, and he thinks
that I can cover
All the city with these skatelets and a score of empty
chairs.

If I sent out on the murder that fool college chap he'd
chowder
Up the story, for although he's full of Latin and
of Greek,

AT THE CITY DESK.

It would take a hundred thousand pounds of brown
prismatic powder
To arouse him up to action, he's so wooden and so
weak.

Now, my boy, you must see to it, that lean lady poet
ceases
To get near me with her verses, and from out the
building coax
That queer, old dried-up animal who'd have us print
his thesis
On political economy among the Fiji folks.

There's a whistle down the pipe to ask just how we
missed the "riot"
Of the strikers, swelled and padded by those fakers
of the *World*,
And the telephone's a-ringing, for it never can keep
quiet;
How I wish that into Hades all its bells and things
were hurled.

Oh, it's great to be a desk man, for his life is full of
glory!
Yes, of glory and of luxury and ease it's always full.

AT THE CITY DESK.

Here's a note from the proprietor a-killing my best
story,

For the man we would have roasted has a business
office pull.

Oh, they're resting on their détails and they're
dreamy and they're dopy,

And that cursed court reporter has to go off on his
spree,

And the star men do the dude act and forget to send
in copy,

But there's some one has to hustle, I can tell you,
and it's me.

THE LITERATURE OF THE RUSHED.

THE LITERATURE OF THE RUSHED.

"How do journalists grind their grist?"—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

How do the journalists grind their grist?
Learn, sir, from the lay of an optimist.

Scuttering in on the train,
Crowded and vulgar and hot,
Jostled at elbow and back,
Writing "society" rot.
Scratching a pad on your knee,
With pencilings jagged and rough;
Interrupted by telegrams three:
"Why the blank don't you rush in your stuff?"

Or, perhaps, you sit down at the side
Of the crude rustic telegraph plug
Who wires off your screed while you scrawl
And by his fool questions are dug:
"That word 'cut'?" Why, I thought it was 'cat.'
That 'Johnson'? Looks like it was 'Jones.'
Guess *you* never learned how to write."
And so on, in spite of your groans.

THE LITERATURE OF THE RUSHED.

Or crushed in a stale, stuffy hall
Where you write down the speech of a dunce
While flanked by a hundred old hens,
Eighteen of them cackling at once;
And even if all take the floor,
While the chairwoman screams like a hawk,
Still, still you must follow the trend,
Though the trend be a tangle of talk.

And when you sit down at your desk
To write up a long interview,
On one side the type-writer clicks
And your poor head is dictated through
By the great star who never can write
But bawls in a regular flow,
And you grind while they click and they clack,
Whether you love it or no.

Or grabbing each sheet while you write,
A boy takes it up to the room
Of the night man whose job is to feed
The great typographical loom.
As you scrawl, thunders break up above;
Their roarings your tired ears rend,
And clenching your fingers you cry,
"How the deuce did that last sentence end?"

THE LITERATURE OF THE RUSHED.

Wise men read the paper and say,
"He split his infinitive there,
And the wrong tense he used in this place.
Such rhetoric—is n't it queer?"
It ought to be perfect, of course,
And never by any chance mushed—
Smooth of phrase, clear of thought and well-turned,
This literature of the rushed.

THE ANCIENT JOURNALIST.

THE ANCIENT JOURNALIST.

I SAW him close the door and shuffle out,
 A broken man,
Full of incertitude of self and doubt
 Of what there ran
In new-age harmony the world along—
The new world, singing its new song.

Too old to know the later way of life,
 Too old to feel
Or grasp the meaning of its rush and strife,
 Too blind to steal
More than a glimpse of that which cast
Its light upon him as it shimmered past.

And this he knew that day in its first woe,
 For he had thought
To keep somewhat within the ebb and flow,
 Know what was wrought
In this wide world of working and of wit,
From day to day, and sense the worth of it.

THE ANCIENT JOURNALIST.

But anciently none better knew the signs
That told of war
Or peace or brooding change. He read the lines
And saw afar.

His times were times of sturdy views,
And what he surely knew for news *was* news.

But now has sprung a race of pressmen pert,
Born of the age
Of cleverness, who frisk and featly flirt
With pen on page;
With them he cannot join, and if he try
His pen but stiffly turns, and turns awry.

Old man, and not yet old (so swiftly flies
Time's stream with those
Who slave where whirls the press), small is your prize
At this dread close
Of your long service. Would that you might greet
That recompense of labor which is meet.

But still a certain glory sits you there;
I would not change
You in your place for highest or most rare
In all the range
Of pressmen, good or bad or worse,
Who cleave to cleverness nor know its curse.

OUR LADY FASTIDIOUS.

OUR LADY FASTIDIOUS.

SHE receives her assignment
With air condescending
From the desk man so gracious,
Who fears of offending,
Though deepest misgiving
His bosom is rending
That she 'll not pursue it
To good, fruitful ending.

It takes but a trifle
From duty to flop her;
She must be assisted
By blue-coated copper.
She 'll turn back in a minute
If aught be improper,
But if she 's determined
There 's nothing can stop her.

She 's mindful of weather;
It mus n't be sloppy;
Her gown she 's a care for;
She 's fussy and foppy.

OUR LADY FASTIDIOUS.

Should there be a shower
She'll bring in no copy,
And if reprimanded
Get red as a poppy.

Her face is what makes her,
You list to my ditty;
It is n't her work, for
She's not very witty.
But there is no other
In all the great city
So queenly, so dainty,
So proud and so pretty.

She misses good stories;
Suppose that the rest did?
They'd be thrown from the office
Where snugly they're nested.
But the powers overlook her,
She's never molested.
If an editor chide her,
He's sure to be bested.

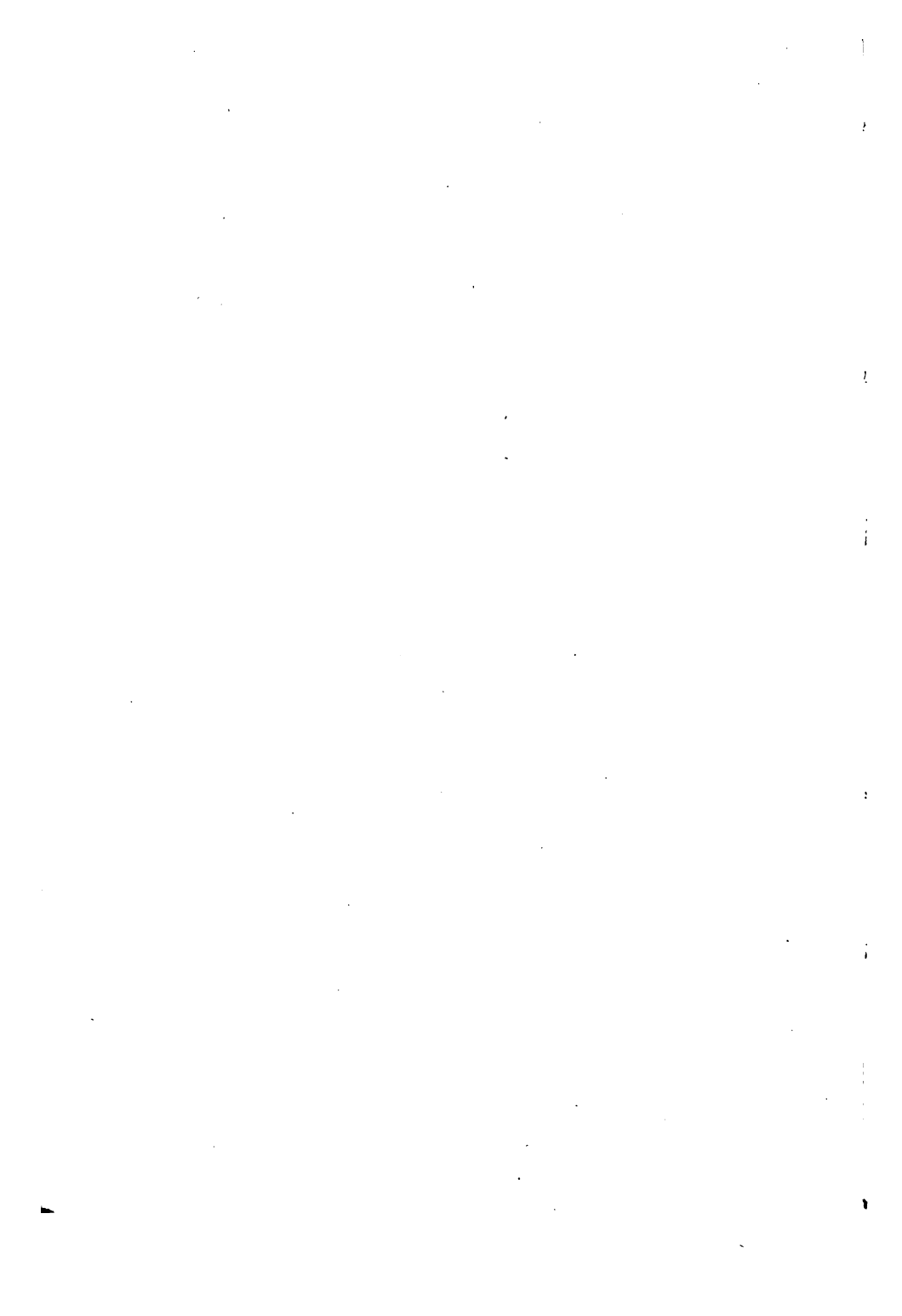
She knows how to manage
Desk men if they scout her.
She can play the grand lady
Or rank out-and-outer.

OUR LADY FASTIDIOUS.

She can cry if they happen
To quizz or to doubt her;
She'll tear up her copy
If they dare to flout her.

Yes, as a reporter
There's nothing will cover
Her rank imperfections,
And no power above her
Can hasten or check her
Or pull her or shove her.
Then why do we keep her?
Why, all of us love her!

OTHER ADVENTURES IN VERSE



THE YOSEMITE ROAD.

Up where the gray peaks serenely take counsel together
My desire mounts as lightly, as lightly as wind-wafted
feather;

But I go with no haste, for all time in the road lies
before me,

And my roan ambles gently as if with a joyance he
bore me.

I ride by the red banks, by gulches and waterworn
sluices,

Exulting in spring and its earth-smells and liberal
juices.

All the delicate firstlings of leaf-flocks on branch tips
are swelling,

Unrolling, outspreading and gleaming and tremblingly
telling

'Their rapturous story,

Unfolding the glory

Abiding in Nature's all-compassing breast,

Each leaflet narrating with ardor and zest.

Ah, road! I am with you to ride and to ride where you
lead me,

And on your rare sights and calm joys to most royally
feed me;

THE YOSEMITE ROAD.

You open the way to the ultimate heights of adventure ;
Your promise is sweet, and if ill befall I shall not
censure.

When pious aspirants to hills and their holy sincerities
Fare hither their faith is renewed in the infinite verities ;
You guide to the Summits of Solace, remotest immu-
nities

From the clamorings strange of the hasting and hiving
communities.

The airy affairs of the birds in their business of nesting
And of squirrel philosophers grave that on high boughs
are resting,

The stream babbling nonsense to bowlders of gray,
freckled granite

Below where the maidenhair trembles in breezes that
fan it,—

Each of these makes quick captive a wayfaring fancy
of mine,

And my heart gives a leap

As in passing I peep

Up the towering shaft of a bold sugar-pine.

There at last are the snow-peaks, in virginal chastity
standing !

Through the nut-pines I see them, their ranges and
ridges expanding.

THE YOSEMITE ROAD.

Ye peaks! from celestial-wrought sanctities benisons
 casting,
Ye know not your puissant influence, lifting and
 lasting:
Nothing factitious, self-conscious or impious bides in
 you;
Your faith it is stalwart and truthfulness ever resides
 in you.
 On your high serenities
 No hollow amenities
Nor worldly impurities cast their dread blight;
August and courageous, you stand for the right;
The gods love you and lend you their soft robes of
 white.

Down by the bridge where the white tumult dashes
 with thunderous
Roarings and splashings and wildest of wild sprawlings
 under us,
We speed, horse and rider, and clattering carelessly,
 wildly go,
Swift reaching the meadows beflowered where rilletts
 so mildly flow.
By the pine-bordered, sweet-scented, sun-favored flat
 we pass slowly on,
While a music is wafted from somewhere, unearthly,
 Æolian.

THE YOSEMITE ROAD.

Here hovers the question,
"What is this suggestion
Disquietly brooding o'er stream and o'er grass?"
Yet on to the pinewood and thicket, unheeding I pass.

Rumorings, murmurings low and obscure intimations,
Mysterious whisperings, thrillings and awesome elations!
From that interspace vast there what is it the wind is
forth sending?
Does it augur a vision? Is aught of an evil impending?
The tamaracks listen and listen and feel the strange
awe of it.
You tall pine, bent backward affrighted, oh, tell what
you saw of it!
Ye domes, looking down with that feigning of placid
indifference,
Ye know, O ye wise ones, the source of this fear and
this reverence!

Across the great gorge there the cliffs arise mystical,
magical,
And a cloud-puff swims over the gulf space so hell-
deep and tragical.
Dismounting, I fearsomely, cautiously move to the
brink of it,

THE YOSEMITE ROAD.

The wonder, the wonder eternal to feast on and drink
of it;
I creep between bare granite rocks to a high shelf's
extremity,
And with dizzying terror and rapture commingled look
down on Yosemite!

CARLYLE TO JANE.

CARLYLE TO JANE.

*After Mill had told them of the loss of the "French Revolution" manuscript
which the historian had lent him to read.*

PRAISE God, he's gone at last! A score of words
Had told the tale of it, but we must have
A babblement of hours and hours. Ah, well!
I'm sorry for the man; he seemed to be
Nigh daft, and pale he was as Hector's ghost.
And his bewildered wrestlings! His wild eyes!
He scarce could mumble forth the awful words
Which came to me as sentence. Oh, how flimsy
That sad pretense I made! What did I say?
I know I spoke no ill. His grief was such
I must respect it and I did; but there
Between us lay the dismal, ghastly fact—
The manuscript I lent him was no more!
Thrown by a zealous flunky to the flames,
With other rubbish stuff! "Well, don't lament,"
I said; "another I can make, to all
Intent the same! I said it, yes, and laughed;
For men may laugh on scaffolds. He laughed, too,
Like any nervous girl.

O Jeanie, lass!

The book is burnt—that travail gone for naught!
The book! The book! Gone—every sheet! Our book,

CARLYLE TO JANE.

My Jeanie—yours and mine—our own, own bairn!
God sent none other children but our books,
And this, our proudest, lies in ashes, dead—
Swept out by some low hireling's broom. That book
Was wrought from out my veins; my heart's best
blood

Was spread on every page. And you, my lass,
Bright as a steady lamp, beamed there beside
My desk and lit my weary-plodding pen;
And when the coming chapter lay but dim
Within the hazy background of the brain,
You, by your kindly patience, listening close,
Braced its weak claim to clarity. And when
You glowed with warm approval then I knew
I had wrought well, nor needed other sign
To make me know the dream I dreamed was true.
No, Jeanie, 't is no marvel ye are sair;
Your arms, close clinging round my neck tell that,
As do your tears.

“We'll make another book—
It's very counterpart?” Oh, you are wild!
I told Mill that but now. Words, lassie, words!
The idlest words! This business of books
I'm done with for all time! What do they care
For true books who are so well pleased with false?
Do they deserve such meat as I have given—
They who deem cat's meat fittest food for man?
But from their stupor I could sting these slaves,—
Had thought to do so once, but now no more.

CARLYLE TO JANE.

Yes, I could make 'em wince, the pompous churls,
And churchmen, too, and smooth respectables
Of all kinds and degrees!

Mill! What cared he?

Flabby fanatic theorist, full of wind!
He offered pay. Ye heard, lass—*pay* for *that*!
A rain of ingots—would it stead a man
For such fierce work—a book born of his soul?
Could he have rightly priced one precious page
Of that good book, he never would have left
The thing to hands of saphead servitors.
He never sensed its worth. He could not read
Aright a single line. So dense, so dense
These animate clothespegs, these poor beechen brains!

“Write it again?” Nay, lassie, I have done
With all this writing. Let us gang elsewhither—
To Weimar—Weimar, eh? Why not? But there
It would be books again—more books; No, no!
I couldna keep me from the writing there.
Let us go overseas to some wild land,
Some Michigan, where men can work like men
And *be* men. I am sick o' this dour town,
This London—ugly wen on Nature's face.
Let's to the desert, lassie; we but eke
A living—ay, a starving, in this place;
And there I would break whinstone or cut peats.
Oh, I would work with axe, or spade, or hoe,
Or anything but pen!

CARLYLE TO JANE.

There, there! I hurt
Ye, lass, and ye were hurt full sair, God kens!
In that drear Craig-o-putta you 'd enough
Of desert, dear. We'll nae go overseas.
But where? "To desk—write it again?" Ah, why
Do you so mock and mock? You've never writ
Ten books in one and had the whole ten burnt.
"Write it again?" Oh, cease! Don't tell the tale
Of it to tempt me. Well I know it all.
"And once again could write it?" Oh, I *could!*
Calonne, Marat and Mirabeau. What use?
Fall of Bastille! Ay, ay! We warmed to that!
"Can warm again," say you? Yes, *can!* But gods!
All that strained heart-work! Ay, the old Bastille!
Let's think, let's think: The rebel din, the yells
And roar and rush and wild upturn of faces.
Oh, yes, I *could!* "And will?" insist you—"will?"
Ay, Jeanie, *will!* It shall be done! It shall!
It *shall!* That's good, lass, smile.

I know they care
Not for me! I can see their flashing harness
In the Park. You smug! you prurient smug!
You self-pleased highnesses! you valiant ones!
Who there amang ye all could write that book
But once? What man of ye could write it twice?
Yet I can do it and I will; yes, I.
I'll write it and I'll throw it at your feet,
And you may trample it. What say you, lass?
"They cannot trample that?" Weel, if they did

CARLYLE TO JANE.

'T would last as long. They cannot hurt the thing
Or me. I'll build it better than it was
And it shall stand, a book to last for ages.
I do not write for *them*, but for that time
When men shall get their sight; when they shall see
With clear eyes, not gold-blinded ones!

Now, lass,

To bed, to bed! This night I'm here with you;
To-morrow I shall be with old King Louis,
Bien-aimé, and see him die again;
See crimson lightnings of revolt strike France,
And live the fierceness of mad peasants' rage.
But, ah! the task of Robespierre himself
Was not more dread, more terrible than mine!

THE IMPERIOUS DEAD.

THE IMPERIOUS DEAD.

Unto a desperate heart,
Here on thy sands, what hope, O Sea,
Canst send to-night and what of sympathy
As here I sit, alone, apart,
Watching the white foam from thy surges start
And swiftly shoreward flee?

Last night we walked this shore,
Slow, with ineffable joy as swift
As the fleet foam which came from thee, a gift
Of gladness, thy pervasive roar
Making a music I may hear no more,
A lyrical uplift!

On wave-tips to the skies
A trail of liquid light ran higher,
Yet paler than my pulsing heart's desire
When the large moon the fall and rise
Of her sweet bosom lit and her dark eyes
Grew lustrous with love's fire.

THE IMPERIOUS DEAD.

But what had she discerned
Within mine eyes that the strange fear
Of me should dart and dim and disappear
In hers and dart again? I turned,
Though all my animate being burned
To press anear, anear!

Now once more to the brim,
To drink and ever after have
The cup and my heart in exultance lave.
But swift love's fire waned dim
Before the interposition silent, grim,
Of a forgotten grave!

That lowly, weed-grown mound
Uprose and outspread high and far,
An awful, imminent alp, to bar
From me the sweet that I had found
Most sweet of all; forbiddingly it frowned
And hid from me my star!

"From my sad, sorrowing sight,
Dead face," I moaned, "canst thou not keep
Thy features white? Dead form, why dost thou creep
Out of the mold to mock the night,
This night of all blest nights most blest, most bright?
Dead eyes, oh, why not sleep?"

THE IMPERIOUS DEAD.

And now we drift away,
Apart, and shall I surely know
If that low mound may ever keep it low?
Will those dead, wistful eyes obey
My word and that dead form in darkness stay,
No more to grieve me so?

A cloud floats low upon
The waves, belike a black-sailed bark,
And two stretch forth white hands from out the dark.
Illuminate with flame of love is one
And one is cold, her sweet face white and drawn
And her snow-bosom stark!

Now one—the quick—sinks fast;
The dead remains, her two white hands
Still stretching forth to me upon the sands,
As one who to the ultimate cast
Keeps faith and willingly forgives the past
And weaves anew love's bands.

I read thy answer, Sea,
Writ in the influent foam and tide
And in the cloud: Thou sayest she that died
Still lives love's holy life for me,
And that for me no other bride may be
But that bright spirit bride!

MUIR OF THE MOUNTAINS.

MUIR OF THE MOUNTAINS.

A LEAN, wild-haired, wild-bearded, craggy man,
Wild as a Modoc and as unafraid,
A man to go his way with no man's aid,
Yet sweet and soft of heart as any maid.

Sky-loving, stalwart as the sugar-pine,
Clean, simple, fragrant as that noble tree,
A mountain man, and free as they are free
Who tread the heights and know tranquillity.

A man whose speech hints of no studied art,
But careless straying as the stream that flows
And full of grace, poetic as the rose
Which to the wind its pure song-petals throws.

A relish of the larger life is his
And reverence rapt and wonder and deep awe
For any beauty Nature's brush may draw,
A man of faith who keeps each primal law.

Along the secret ways of Nature he
Makes careful quest, and she unto him speaks
And shows him that so eagerly he seeks,—
How toils the Hand that sculptures all the peaks.

MUIR OF THE MOUNTAINS.

The skylands brown, the blest sky-waters blue
He haunts and has a curious, kindly eye
For glaciers, where his bold feet dare to try
The dizziest summits and their threats defy.

A coarse and stinted fare to him is rich
If it be seasoned with the savory
Sweet airs, while his glad eye is feasting free
Upon the blue domes of Yosemite.

He makes his bed amid the sheltering rocks
Where at his head a blood-red snow-flower blooms;
There sleep more sweetly comes than ever comes
In the stale, heated air and dust of rooms.

Unarmed, he greets the grizzly in the woods,
Birds trill him friendly notes from tree-tops tall;
The ouzel, thrush and quail and whimsical
Gray squirrel and raccoon—he loves them all.

Alone he treads the heights, yet not alone,
For with him go sweet Thoreau and the blest
Kin-spirits all who share his noble zest
For Nature's ways and with him walk and rest.

THE STAR AND THE WAIF.

THE STAR AND THE WAIF.

A STAR looks in where she lies,

Fair, so fair, asleep,

With wide, blue, fixed and staring eyes,

A sinful, sweet-faced sacrifice,

Fair, so fair, asleep.

The beams of the star intermit,

Fair, so fair, asleep.

And darkling and drooping and sadly flit,

Full, oh, how full of the pity of it!

Fair, so fair, asleep.

Now the eye of compassion is clear,

Fair, so fair, asleep.

Through the gloom of the room doth it reverently peer

And sees a wan smile on the dead face there,

Fair, so fair, asleep.

"Oh, now you are free from shame,

Fair, so fair, asleep."

Sighs the star, with pitying passion aflame,

"Now you are free from the shame and the blame,

Fair, so fair, asleep.

THE STAR AND THE WAIF.

" But, ah, when I saw you before,
 Fair, so fair, asleep,
Would I had cared for you, guarded you more,
A guide to you been in the street's strange roar,
 Fair, so fair, asleep.

"Yet this did your fate decree,
 Fair, so fair, asleep.
But not of the lost and accurst shall you be;
Come, spirit, speed to your home with me!
 Fair, so fair, asleep."

A RHAPSODY OF THE RAIN.

A RHAPSODY OF THE RAIN.

WIND-SWEPT, rain-spattered, wildly free,
I tread the upward trail, wet tree-arms beckoning me.
Again I see in Nature what is mine;
I feel the friendship of the kindly pine,
And, passing, lay my hand on its moist dress
In soft caress.
Now all the savage in me gloats,
For on a humid air-wave floats
The thrumming of the forest lyre!
Higher I mount and higher,
Singing a Dryad's storm-wild strain
In the mad rapture of the rain!

A fugue of echoes upward sweeps,
Making strange music on the steeps.
As each bold, high-swung turn I pass along,
I feel a rarer joy of life and hear a sweeter song.
The soft rain drips from God's high eaves
And lisps its true love to the leaves.
(But truer far my love
For her above!)

A RHAPSODY OF THE RAIN.

Oh, what to me their creeds and cults
While on these sacred heights my soul exults?
What all their sordid gain?
I know the rapture of the rain!

The ridge I reach—a sight—
The sea spread out in swirling light!
And up the wooded reach
Come roarings from the beach.
But only misty welcome signals me
From yon cold shimmer of the sea.
No, not for that I dared the storm,
But for a greeting sure and warm
From one who waits alone—
My own—my own!
Ah, there I see her low brown roof at last!
Heart, heart of mine, why throb so fast?
A gust sweeps down the rippling drops amain,
Again the rapture of the rain!

SONG OF THE ARCTIC SUMMER.

SONG OF THE ARCTIC SUMMER.

JUNE on the Yukon, genial June,
And all my soul awake for it!
Would I might round a Norland rune
And Norland music make for it.

Red fire-weeds blaze along the banks,
Backed by the pines' dark mystery,
And wild birds flutter and give thanks,
Or sing their southern history.

Their thanks they sing on bending reed,
For here the day is long for them,
And here the night is lost, indeed,
And full the hours of song for them.

Near is night's noon and yet—this light;
It scarce is comprehensible.
Of what we know of day or night
Is the circling sun insensible?

SONG OF THE ARCTIC SUMMER.

Afar beyond the fishing boats,
Beyond that darkling dot of earth,
That tree-crowned islet, round which floats
A glory that seems not of earth,

Between two cloud-bars red he swims,
Bright skeins of color weaves in them,
And now he darts and now he dims,
And stains of purple leaves in them.

His ruddy glow reflects below,
Making the waters pink with it,
And opal wavelets gleam and flow
Upon the tide and sink with it.

Midnight! and still above the lines
Of sky and river, fair and bright,
A golden book-mark there he shines
'Twixt two day-pages, rare and white.

Midnight! and still his rays are rife;
My hopes and dreams all meet me there.
Full symbolized is the deathless life;
Here and hereafter greet me there!

SONG OF THE ARCTIC SUMMER.

He hath not set, yet doth he rise,
He riseth in serenity;
May we thus keep in brighter skies
Our orbits 'through eternity!

THE MASTERED MEN.

THE MASTERED MEN.

THE City lifts her lure and smiles,
The millioned City smiles because
She knows the magic of her wiles
And how to her she draws and draws.

She knows full well a man will sell
His soul to live his precious days
In an effluviated hell
At some sad corner of her ways.

That all the virtues of the vale,
Of tree-fringed hill and grassy down
He madly leaves for street-walks stale
And brick perspectives of the town.

He, when her call he hears, leaves all
His bird-blessed, leaf-draped heritage
To slave and run at whistle-call
Or pale and droop in some foul cage.

THE MASTERED MEN.

He leaves the freedom of the plain,
The freedom of the glade and glen,
The freedom of the wind and rain
To join the tethered, mastered men.

In lieu of sacred airs of lake
And mountain he, in ignorance,
Inhales the odors sewers make
And dwells in din and dissonance.

If him the servile cheer and toast
When the red gold he sought is his,
He sadly finds they honor most
That which he *has*, not what he *is*.

The hale and simple way of life
To which his sober mind was used
Is changed for Trade's swift-whirling strife,
So complex, multifaced, confused.

Lost is his day of real things;
In vain, in vain his lamp he rubs;
To him stale life it only brings,
The sham life of the streets and clubs.

THE MASTERED MEN.

On village maids the City feasts,
 On their bright hopes and brighter eyes,
On their red cheeks she and her beasts
 Feed, and for truths she gives them lies.

Still on fresh blood she feeds and feeds
 And still she tramples Nature's laws
To glut her never-sated greeds,
 And still she draws, and draws, and draws!

THE AUSTERE CATECHIST.

THE AUSTERE CATECHIST.

To WHAT do you respond—
You who would link with me
In that fine federacy
Called friendship? Are you fond
Of those sad folk unblest
Who make of life a jest?
Does Dante bore you, is old Plutarch tame
And Emerson an empty name?

Do you want tact?
Shrink you from any cosmic fact
Or influence elemental?
Would you be instrumental
In war upon a weakling race for Mammon's sake
And urge a moral reason, make
A bombast plea
Of ethnic, high philanthropy?
Who are your heroes—men that fight in rings?
What moves you? Love you him that sings
A glavering ballad? Oh, do you
Respond to echoes or to voices true?

THE AUSTERE CATECHIST.

Do you want courage your best self to be,
And live in others' cheap expectancy?
Fear you to front the facts of life?
World-contacts do you shun and holy strife?

Have you lost faith,
Is God a guess, religion but a wraith,
Your heart lukewarm?
Do you bow down before the shrine of Form
And basely kneel
At altars of convention nice, and feel
Not the fine and good
In wholesome humanhood,
Although it wear the apron of a smith?
Is Christ to you a myth?
Subtly and always is your sense alert
To serve the ends of self? For the inert,
Crass, gilded fools who know no law
Have you the least of awe?

If to all these you say
An everlasting "Nay,"
Then shall we make an intimate, holy pact and be
As brothers to the end, to dare and dree
World-onsets at their worst. . . . Ah! your "Nay"
rings so true,
Were I but worthy so to do,
I would a spirit kinship claim to you.

THE CROTALUS.

THE CROTALUS.

A COIL of browns, a whirr!
A dart of flame!
A child's shrill cry, amid the grass a stir;
She shrieks my name!
In agony she calls
And calls. O God!
Why hast thou made this slimy thing that
crawls
Thy chastening rod?

THE INCOMMUNICABLE.

THE INCOMMUNICABLE.

ABOVE the sea the moon's slim horn
Pales fast in gray and growing light,
And now I see the death of Night,
The old-new marvel of the Morn.

The waters glow, a burst of rose
Reflects soft glory on our sails;
Now upward shoot Dawn's shining trails,
And swift the dazzling wonder grows.

But I stare dull at what is wrought,
As by the hearth one sits and stares
Into the fire that brightly flares,
My utmost vision set at naught.

This mystery deep, and wide as deep,
Of day-birth, as of child-birth, lives
In man's mind vaguely. It but gives
Suggestions such as come in sleep.

THE INCOMMUNICABLE.

But what is borne from out the vast
Of sky and sea, so faint, obscure,
Amorphous, wordless, should be sure
And plain as that plain, stalwart mast.

Though he read glibly ancient glyphs
And wisely scorn the riddling Sphinx,
What secrets bide man little thinks
Within the clouds that cap the cliffs.

While his brief ken may be employed
He yearns for what the blue arch bars,
To know the story of the stars,
To read the verse writ in the void.

His earthling Science, mole-eyed, creeps
Along the paths that lead to light.
What says to her the star-strewn height,
What speaks to her from out the deeps?

And if the secret springs defy
Man's eager touch nor will unclasp,
Shall there yet lie beyond his grasp
The answer to his "What am I?"

THE INCOMMUNICABLE.

Oh, would that it were fit and meet
That there might speak unto our race
The spirit of illimitable space
That sits aloft, aloof, discrete!

An east wind sweeps the sea, and soft
From out its murmurs come the words,
Faint, faint as notes of far-off birds,
That singing, wheeling, soar aloft:

“Not star-wise shall your people grow
Nor god-wise shall they ever be
Till from their false ties they are free
And free from all their sham and show.

“To read Apocalyptic signs
They must be free from sins of flesh,
For while their lusts their souls immesh
They may but faintly see the lines.

“Free must they be from crimes of trade,
From foolish vauntings of their worth;
And they must free their sorry earth
From war, from rapine and from raid.

THE INCOMMUNICABLE.

"From those sad lures that have enticed
And made him prey to vulture's beak
Man must turn face and humbly seek
The plain and simple way of Christ.

"In vain his orisons prepense;
He shall not reach to Heaven fair
Though he may pile a Pelion prayer
Upon his Ossa of offense.

"Let him look up, let him arise
And scorn the pathway he hath trod;
Then shall the finger-touch of God
With sight divine thrill his dull eyes!"

VOICES THAT ABIDE.

VOICES THAT ABIDE.

THE sovereign poet will not cease to sing
While notes arise from any living thing
Of which he sang. Earth still will gladly hail
The voice of Keats in its last nightingale.
What soars above us softly? Hark, friend, hark!
Blithe Shelley's song swells forth from that blithe lark;
And see where wings his soul! Yes, 't is the same
With many more the clear fire of whose fame
Is fanned by sight of objects animate
Or void of life when they are seen with eyes
That look with fondness on the poet's state
And are most blest when soft before them rise
His strains celestial. Doth not Wordsworth's voice
Speak from the modest primrose? I rejoice
When darkly flits a waterfowl alone
Through evening skies, for there I see mine own
Good Bryant soar; and if a broad sea marsh
Spreads green or gray before me I can hear
The voice of that sad Southron, never harsh,
But always sweet,—the liquid-toned Lanier.
And where a rugged island greets mine eye
I hail the homely Stevenson and Skye.

VOICES THAT ABIDE.

The busy, singing brook I gaze upon
Gives glimpses glad of sweet-voiced Tennyson;
And when a bell booms sadly forth in low
Dirge tones it peals for me the name of Poe.
The stately arches of cathedrals old
Say "Emerson." When to mine ear I hold,
On any shore, beside what waves and foams,
A chambered shell, it whispers to me, "Holmes!"

THE CEANOTHUS.

THE CEANOTHUS.

My hills are poets ; all the year
They sing to me their lays sublime ;
They sing joy songs with voices clear
And sweetest sing in April time.

Then they their purple robes put on,
Robes spun in April's lilac looms,
Their royal flowered robes they don,
For then the ceanothus blooms !

Oh, kingly poets are my hills !
But kingliest in April time,
For then each green breast gladdest thrills
And pulses with most royal rhyme.

These are the days, the singing days,
When my king-poets send aloft
Their highest, purest songs of praise,
Strains of the ceanothus soft.

THE CEANOTHUS.

Faint, faint at first, then deeper toned
Till all the banks are gowned and caped,
And my hill monarchs, high enthroned,
Are in the ceanothus draped!

Stay, Spring! still let my monarchs wear
Their robes and sing their songs sublime;
Let it be April all the year
And always ceanothus time!

T' AMO.

T' AMO.

From the Italian of Cavallotti.

I SEEK through the pages of fable
For the sweetest way love I may tell,
With what words on the island Calypso
Tried Ulysses, the bold, to impel,
In what accents the love-devoured Venus
Communed with the hunter that day;
I study the pages of fable,
And——*I love thee*—naught else I can say.

From the sweet songs of Orpheus I gather
No word that will help to impress
On thy heart a new sense of my loving,
Though closely the leaves I address;
What he sang to his love I would sing thee,
My voice I would gladly make ring;
But my poor notes are feeble and broken.
I love thee—'t is all I can sing.

In the verses of Sappho my questing
Is rewarded by nothing more bright;

T' AMO.

I am weary of pages so musty.

Ah, here in the dark is a light!

Here it is—here is the phrase, dear,

That I sought for so long! It is Greek.

Construe it? Why, yes. 'T is—“*I love thee!*”

And those words alone would I speak.

"PIU NON VI LEGGEMMO AVANTE."

"PIU NON VI LEGGEMMO AVANTE."

"We read no more that fatal day
Of the love tale of Lancelot
And Guinevere." Oh, do not lay
Your fault, Francesca, and your blot
Upon the book, for it doth say
Not merely how those fell, but what
Befell their sinning and the way
That they atoned for what they wrought.

That tale, that sorry tale, I ween,
Had you read further, lady fair
Of Rimini, you would have seen
How they of Camelot, perjured pair,
Were slain by love, nor had you been
Betrayed by false Paolo there,
Nor felt the vengeful blade so keen—
Had you read further, lady fair!

THE MUSE IS DEAD.

THE MUSE IS DEAD.

THE Muse is dead and with her dies, alas!
Appreciation of her noble worth!
When now we hear a line of classic song
'T is oftener intoned with pert burlesque
Than otherwise. Sincerity serene
And Reverence, are both the souls of you
Forever fled from this our poor, blind age?
Come back and make these babbling creatures sane,
The drivel of their drawing-rooms displace
By that sweet, sacred sense which makes man man
And woman woman,—such a worthy sense
And humor true as had our wise forbears
Who, fired in heart and soul by Freedom's torch,
Wrought out for us that liberty which we
So much abuse. Rise, Reverence, oh, rise,
And here be reinstated, even here.
Sincerity, if thou canst strive against
Such flagrant mockings and such meannesses,
Return to us before the last true speech
Be drowned in floods of glavering babblement!

READING "ENDYMION."

READING "ENDYMION."

"A THING of beauty is a joy forever."

Dear Keats, 'tis very plain to me you never
Knew Madge, more beauteous than Helen of Troy.
Oh, she is far more grief to me than joy!

THE ROSE POEM.

THE ROSE POEM.

LIKE that gold rose I'll shape thee,
With bright rose leaves I'll drape thee,
And thou shalt be divine,
O budding song of mine!
In my hand's hollow grow,
No matter, swift or slow,
So that thou be a rose.

Fond-nurtured hour by hour,
Grow in my hand, my flower
Of song! I spare no art
To make each petaled part,
Each leaf and every tint
A blossoming truth, nor stint
My labor or its throes.

Fragile and fragrant rise,
My flower, a lyric prize!
Grow in what sun and rain
Haunteth the poet's brain.
. . . Thou'rt finished! Each sad fault I see,
And in my hand I crumple thee,
Thou false, false rose!

THE LOVED OF ZEUS.

THE LOVED OF ZEUS.

Look on the roll, star-strewn, illuminate,
Of sages, of the great, the time-revered.
Who of all these through life his true course steered,
Lived his philosophy? Not the sedate,
Calm Socrates who left to austere fate
His close kin-folk and stroked his Sophist beard
'Midst fellows fond; not Plato learned who reared
In Athens grove his school, god-loved and great,
But never lived his dream; nor yet that wise
Old teacher of the walking school, far-famed,
Nor fawning Seneca of Nero's court,
Nor Antoninus, he who kept his eyes
Upon the stars while his brute soldiers maimed
And blinded Christians in arenic sport.

Nor did that noble pagan, good Montaigne,
Cleave to the worthy creed he made; and when
Rousseau, arraigned by his own contrite pen,
Made known his grosser self, the damning stain
Was plain revealed. So, too, in that sad strain
Which to Carlyle was life we see again
That sages are but men, not more than men,
Not like the gods that on Olympus reign.

THE LOVED OF ZEUS.

But that white light which fiercely beats upon
The deeds of those who raise philosophies
Found one at Concord who feared not its fire:
It vainly searched the life of Emerson.
A constant habit of high thought was his;
He lived the laws he taught and none taught higher.

THE TRANSPORT.

THE TRANSPORT.

A DEEP blue bay, a bristle of masts,
A transport sailing out to sea,
And a flutter of white that waves to me
As I strain to the sight of it while it lasts,
And he sails out to sea.

He *would* go, he *would* go, though the way was far ;
The gleam of the guns and the uniformed line
Caught his young fancy, as once they caught mine
In a righteous war, in a holy war,
And he sails forth on the brine.

That clutch of his hand I can feel, I can feel !
And I know 'tis the last that an unkindly fate
Will give to me soon or give to me late.
Away he is borne on a fleeting keel,
Away through the Golden Gate.

Oh, gladly I'd give him again and again
To a war of worth, to a war of right ;
Yes, they might slay him there in my sight ;
But not for Trade and its treasoning men
Would I see him go forth to fight.

THE TRANSPORT.

I have lost the white flutter, my tear-wet eyes
Have lost it forever and him, I know;
The smoke dims the stripes of the flag I loved so
And still love though it waves in this sad emprise
Of empire in which he *would* go.

Down to the islands to fight for Trade,
Past the sad islands where, in the name
Of Christ, we have taught all they know of shame
And shown them their nakedness, there unafraid
He sails to the lure of fame.

Where the tide-rip battles above the bar
The ship breasts the wind; I am losing her now
And losing him, too, who stood in her bow
And waved and waved as he sailed afar.
Oh, blest be the heart of him now!

Only the smoke-drift over the wave
I can see as I look to the watery west,
Only the black smoke, black and unblest
As an unholy cause, and there to his grave
Sails my bravest, my truest, my best.

TO CHARLES FERGUSON.

TO CHARLES FERGUSON.

HERE, where the leaves the whole year through
Are green and roses bloom 'midst dew
And fruits hang fair, I dream anew
Of that gray, arid zone
Which, as it bears and ripens you,
Is fruitful as our own.

Your gospel of the open air
And of the free God dwelling there
Strikes at the ramparts of Despair
And lays the stalking wraith
Of theist fiction which you dare
In your fine, fragrant faith.

The truths sublime which you address
To this sad age of storm and stress,
This wilderness of worldliness,
Where you cry out your word,
Will ever forward, forward press;
They must be heard!

RETURN OF THE VAQUERO.

RETURN OF THE VAQUERO.

ONCE more I am under your spell,
Gray land stretching far to the peaks;
Drear land and dear land, it is well,
For your spirit to mine again speaks,
Of blessedness primal it speaks.

I was tempted afar, I was sold,
But they never shall sell me again
To the ease of town shelters that hold
Subtle charm for the pale, indoor men,
Sordid cities that lure sordid men.

Free! how I have chafed to be free!
Year followed dispirited year
The while you were waiting for me,
Waiting calmly to welcome me here;
Now, chastened, I come to you here.

I am come as one who has felt
The Punitive Hand in its haste,
While before the false altars he knelt;
I am come to forget in this waste
A life that was waster than waste.

RETURN OF THE VAQUERO.

Waste? You are no waste, gray old plain,
But rich in rich gifts to the mind
Not born of inanity vain;
Arid fancy may aridness find,
But your beauty is not for the blind.

It is good to be here; it is good
To see junipers storm-proof whose roots
Burrow deep; good yon lone cottonwood;
Good, afar there, the blue blur of buttes—
My religious, my sky-loving buttes!

Beyond where the gray greasewoods nod,
Where my gaze the bold sentry peaks bar,
A buzzard is spying abroad,
Mystic spirals are leading him far,
And he pleaseth mine eye like a star.

Enough of repressions, enough
Of constraints and conformities sere
And complexities; let the good, rough
West wind of this plain sweep them clear;
Its breath makes me franker and freer.

And out of my ears let it blow
All echoes of that dreary school
Which of Nature is always the foe

RETURN OF THE VAQUERO.

And which for his wealth hails the fool,
Drive out all the drawing-room drool!

Ah, eloquent land! I have heard,
Blown abroad on your wild, vagrant airs,
A balm-bringing, sense-soothing word,
A word to calm all my despairs,
A whisper of starry affairs.

Wise land, in your silences wise,
Your immensities one spreading scroll
Of deep revelation to eyes
That can read, let me read, swell my soul;
Here is room for the growth of a soul!

THE WAYS OF DORIS.

THE WAYS OF DORIS.

MAIDEN, in this mild mood
You seem something grown
Afar from elf-loved wildwood,
In tamest haunts of town,
Not this morning's thing of tumult that raced the hill-
side down,
With wild, wind-fluttered gown.

Your ways the fancy capture;
I love them, each and all,
Gray qualm and reddest rapture,
And when your blithe notes fall
Adown the darkening valley amid the redwoods tall
I love their sweet home-call.

In hours when all the magic
Of life is gone amiss,
And there looms aloft a tragic
Blanc to bar out bliss,
All tears and sighs and murmurs I can toss in the abyss,
So potent is a kiss.

THE WAYS OF DORIS.

Soft as the vine caresses
Your window when, contrite,
The chastened wind confesses
Unto the ear of night,
So soft your footstep presses amid the fern leaves
bright,
So soft, so soft and light.

To you glad eyes are lifting,
Star-eyes of flowering grass;
For you the rill is shifting
Its gleaming crumbs of glass;
The laurels bend and whisper their love for you, sweet
lass,
And bless you as you pass.

What wing is Fancy trying?
From this far would you be?
For the gay town are you sighing
That knows not bird or bee?
Ah, that blithe lark-note has caught you, brought you
flying
Back to the flowers and me!

WEARY.

WEARY.

I would be far from this;
I would be where the green waves kiss
 The coral isles;
I would return no more;
I would abide for aye upon that shore
 Where ocean smiles.

There I would live my dreams
Making to be that which now seems,
 And look the whiles
Through the gold haze that smooths
Harsh outlines and the tired spirit soothes.
 Ah, my blest isles!

THE INEVITABLE HOUR.

THE INEVITABLE HOUR.

WHERE will it find me, where?
Within this sweet, wide-windowed room
Where I look out upon the green and bloom
Of hills high rising in blue air
And that sky-hallowed peak, pure as true prayer?
If here, here let it come.

Or will it seek the trail
And meet me there beneath a pine
With needles glimmering glad and breath benign?
So be it then. Why should I quail,
When by the kindly tree the light shall fail
From out these eyes of mine?

Or in the street-whirl mad—
A misstep, clangings of a bell
And then oblivion? Well, ah well!
To make such parting from this glad,
Sweet life were sad, but not so sad
As one that I may tell:

THE INEVITABLE HOUR.

Where greedy, fond heirs grieve
While of the fat will steadfastly
They think, and where a specious, paid-for plea
Goes up from cleric lips that cleave
To cant, where high-feed doctors give life false
reprieve,
And cat-foot lackeys look for things to thief.
Not there, O Death, meet me!

TUSITALA.

TUSITALA.

HERE is the beach of gray old Monterey
Where he was used to walk who made so bright
The hours with his blithe presence and the light
Of whose kind hazel eyes made glad the day
While tales he told of his far Galloway,
From which so sadly he had forced his flight.

He left the charm of his sweet humanhood
Here in this place, the charm that Nature's men
Possess and radiate. I feel it when
The low-bowed cypress in the wind doth brood
Upon his memory and the green pinewood
Smiles proudly, pleased to have inspired his pen.

That gypsy Tusitala, whose strange life
Was one fierce battle with the reaper grim,
We keep in mind; his wild tales grow not dim,
But start up in us like a call of fife
To volunteers. We loved his love of strife,
We loved his pirate way, and we loved him.

TUSITALA.

We knew that he was wise, but now we know
No local oracle was he, but one
Who spoke for every land beneath God's sun.
We knew that he was brave, but did not go
So far with him that we could see the foe
He faced—that foe from whom he would not run.

When Death bent over him and his white page
Grew black before his eyes he made no cry,
No moan, but said: "I have not time to die!"
And, brushing Death away in noble rage,
Turned to his folio and wrote his sage
Epistle or his tale of tragedy.

Yet they denied him bread-work—they, the wise
Among us who refused his proffered screeds.
He would not cheaply write to suit their needs.
His worth such little minds could never prize.
When his great soul blazed through his fervid eyes
They could not see, nor sense his splendid deeds.

Our shipmate he with whom we voyaged far
To islands, of the south for pirate hoard
And high adventure. When the typhoon roared
He laughed, for Faith was ever his clear star;
Nor did he care when past the harbor bar
For better wage than just to be aboard.

TUSITALA.

But he has sailed beyond his treasure isle
And walks the deck with Scott and Hugo now,
Or speaks with Dumas grave and tells him how
He loves his art, or listens to Carlyle;
There sometimes he may see sweet Milton smile
And to King William make his loyal bow.

THE APACHE IN AMBUSH.

THE APACHE IN AMBUSH.

SEE him, prone on his belly behind the mesquite,
In his ears a low music, a song that is sweet;
Is slaying so sweet?

He is waiting and waiting; ah, well can he wait!
For he feeds upon fancy, he feeds upon hate;
How well he can hate!

Yonder dust marks the victim, so soon to be dust,
And behind the mesquite there grows rankly the lust,
The blood-lust, the brute-lust!

The crisp cactus-clump and the green yucca stand
In the range of the marked one; ah, well, that sure
hand
Never fails—cunning hand!

'T is not long now to wait, not much longer to wait;
And he feeds upon fancy, he feeds upon hate;
How well he can hate!

BACK TO THE DESERT.

BACK TO THE DESERT.

CALL it the land of thirst,
Call it the land accurst,
Or what you will;
There where the heat-lines swirl
And wild dust-devils whirl
His heart turns still.

He sighs for no green earth
Where the glad spring makes mirth
To glad skies above.
Oh, for the desert grim
And what it means to him
Of life and love!

Back to the land he knows,
Back where the yucca grows
And cactus bole;
Where the coyote cries,
Where the black buzzard flies
Flyeth his soul!

PRAYER OF YOUTH.

PRAYER OF YOUTH.

DEAR God of Truth, O be Thou ever near me,
Lend me Thy countenance, on me Thy grace bestow ;
Keep me aloof from them that never fear Thee,
Make strong and true my heart and help my soul to
grow.

If Wisdom reave from me my blest illusions,
Rob me of zest of life and make me to despise
Its truths, or lead me to profane intrusions,
Then keep me far from Wisdom, let me not be wise.

Let not the sham life of the tinsel city
Whose false gods all the blazing fires of folly fan
Blast the green tendrils of my human pity;
Oh, let me still revere the sacred soul of man !

THE MESSAGE.

THE MESSAGE.

FRESH wafts of fragrant morning stray
Up through the cañon from the bay.
My sunny station on the hill
Looks down on mazy woods that fill
The eye with gay, dew-jeweled green
Midst which the songsters trill and preen.
Aloft there in the western sky
Bold Tamalpais lifts him high;
So near in this clear air he stands
Methinks with him I might shake hands;
For friendly face he bends on those
Who would enjoy his kinship close.

But not this hour such sights may claim
My nighest thought. Of one who came
One glad day to this roof and read
His lilted lines and broke our bread—
Of him I dream. His calm, kind face
And rhythmic notes still haunt the place.
Over his passion-fluttered page
He grandly voiced his noble rage
Against the guilty who despoil

THE MESSAGE.

And make a prey of those who toil,
Against the selfish men of greed
And all that foul and wolfish breed.
On these he launched his lyric curse
And lashed them with hot whirls of verse.
His airy kin approval lent,
While veteran redwoods bowed assent,
And greeting on a soft wind-wave
The genius of the cañon gave.

O singer of the godlike brow !
I would that thou wert with me now
To look into this hill-rift here
And read Old Nature's chapter dear.
Melodious marshaller of words,
A minstrel thou to match the birds ;
And ever hast thou stalwart stood
In the first file of humanhood.

Once came a message from thy pen
Unto me here, and now again
I send it forth from this far height
To thee upon a shaft of light,
Swift o'er the leaves by dew-dots pearled :
" My heart to thee 'across the world! "

SATIRE.

SATIRE.

WISER the honest words of a child
Than the scornful scholar's fleers;
Richer a fortnight of crudest faith
Than a score of cynic years.

LOST RIVER.

LOST RIVER.

RAPTLY I listen to the singing pines
Which blend their music, River, with thine own;
Raptly I trace the portents and the signs
So thickly in these awesome airs bestrown.

Thy waters make white tumult there above,
But here, in deep pool sinking, move in black
And circle like a fear-tormented dove
That turns, death-dreading, to fly back.

But, Stream, there is no backward flight for thee;
Thou must to this scene die and pass below,
Fulfilling now that darker destiny
Prefigured at thy birth amid the snow:

These glad, green wilds to lave and love and leave,
Thy singing here to cease, nor more to blend
With songs of these sad pines which grieve and grieve
What is to them thy melancholy end.

LOST RIVER.

But this I know: far from thy present strife
Thou'lt glide again by tree and trailing vine.
Intent upon thy brighter after-life,
New faith I feel in after-life of mine.

TO EDWARD CARPENTER IN ENGLAND.

TO EDWARD CARPENTER IN ENGLAND.

I MARVEL, friend, that arrant Aristocracy,
Soft-palmed, anæmic, still endures
Such riving thunderbolts as yours ;
That never has your drum-call of Democracy
Cowed those vain creatures in the Court
Of Idleness wherein they sport ;
I marvel that the flat notes of Hypocrisy
Beside the vibrant voice of you
Are heard, the false tones with the true ;
And strange it seems to me that base Plutocracy
Thinks sacred things may still be priced
And would for vile gain barter Christ
Yet hold, brave heart, unto your high Theocracy,
Your God whom none can buy or sell !
Not all the harshest notes of Hell
Shall drown your rolling drum-voice of Democracy !

THE DRONES OF TOWN.

THE DRONES OF TOWN.

A MIDSUMMER FANTASY.

FROM this high window niche above the street
I look down on the dreamers and the drones,
So bent upon their nothings and their noise,
So much concerned with vague affairs of soft
Inconsequence. These indolent, shiftless ones,
These aimless insects on the heated plate
Of pavement, haste them with a hurried tread
And such an air of circumstance as none
Display whose toil is wholesome, sane and true.
Impracticals, why idle here? Why mass
Yourselves to go about this fruitless toil
Of idly heaping nothings upon nothings?
O indolents, why throng you aimless here?

Now thoughts float back to me of large affairs
I once transacted on the green bay shores
Near old Point Reyes. An ancient city there
Peopled by all the free and flying things
That love the sea and marsh and trees and skies
Made me its guest while I my dealings had
With its blithe citizens. I walked the streets

THE DRONES OF TOWN.

Of clear and wind-swept sand and often sailed
In stout feluccas with the fisher-folk;
Once lay all day upon a little deck
And commerced with the calmly eloquent clouds,
From them much profit taking, as I thought.
Another day I tented on the beach
And bathed and ran and lazed in shade and sun,
Which tanned my city skin a golden brown;
So much of profit did I reap that day
And more the next. For then I slowly strolled
Where poppy gold gleamed in a generous field
Which gave me of its hoard though not a flower
I plucked, but left each one to smile and lift
Its happy head to Heaven. That afternoon
I bargained for and bought a store of wealth
From abaloné shells filled full of gems
And rarest inlays, marvelous to view,
Yet not the least gray shell I brought away.

Another day I strolled along the strait
Gray-bordered on the north by stretching sands
And on the south by stern-faced rocky scarps.
The wind blew landward keen and cuttingly,
Clouds scudded low and gulls were scurrying o'er
The dunes, while wild ducks dotted all the bay
To leeward of a lean, long arm of shore;
And kelp and sea moss floated in upon

THE DRONES OF TOWN.

A tide as fleet as waters of a flume.
And once a seal's black head shot upward swift
And large, soft eyes sought mine with steadfast gaze
As human as my own and unafraid.
Much treasure floated in upon that tide
And on that wind, a store that I still hold.

And so for weeks of traffic such as this,
And each day deeply breathing golden air,
Until a lesser business called me home
To idle here with dreamers and with drones.

THE RED MENACE.

THE RED MENACE.

Soft as a shadow creeps, he creeps;
Light as a leopard leaps, he leaps;
And swift as any dart
Dashes his bright, keen blade,
Flashes his glittering blade;
And shall it pierce her heart?

TEUFELSDRÖCKH.

TEUFELSDRÖCKH.

WHEN bristled by a sally rude
Or jostled by a clown-mind crude
Or piqued by plain ingratitude,
For sweetest balm I always go
To Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo.

When dollared dolts do condescend
And all their vulgar breath expend
Impressing me, I gladly end
The torment and my time bestow
On Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo.

Bejeweled ones and overdrest
Will never his sweet peace molest;
They know he'd tear their clothes with zest
And in the dust their baubles throw—
Bold Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo.

Come, come my friend, oh, come with me
Where you his kindly face may see
And learn his clothes philosophy.
You 'll love him well, oh, that I know,—
Dear Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo.

SONNETS

A DIVINE TRESPASS.

A DIVINE TRESPASS.

To hearken to high privacies is base,
But, ah, that "night of fine clear talk" which they,
Our foremost mind and England's had! Oh, pray,
Is it a sinful wish, in that rare case,
That an impersonal Me, devoid of face,
Or eye, but with hearing sense to stay
In secret place securely hidden away,
With no trace of a presence, not a trace,—
A Me effaced,—had listened rapt and caught
And kept the words those masters said, and known
The sacred soul-touch of those two? The sin
(Call it divine eavesdropping, would you not?)
Were it so vile? Ah, yes! it were, I own.
But what a rare, sweet trespass 't would have been!

THE HIGHER PATRIOTISM.

THE HIGHER PATRIOTISM.

To England's Unwreathed Laureate.

BEST patriot of Britain, you who see
With the fierce insight of a bold Carlyle!
More for your country's honor than her smile
You care, intrepid bard. Deep graved should be
The lesson you have given. Yes, low is he
Who cannot blush for his poor flag when vile
Hands fly it and its sacred folds defile
In hellish war of Greed's foul captaincy.
"My country, right or wrong?" A thousand noes!
Though thundered from the mountain-top, I must
Spurn that false word. True patriotic fire
Burned in no heart where such an impulse rose.
Better my flag were dragged in dust, for dust
Is God-made dust, not Baal's blackest mire!

THOREAU OF WALDEN.

THOREAU OF WALDEN.

LYCURGUS of the pen, austere and dread!
You made a stern demand upon our age,
Nor shall we yet escape you. On your page,
Which tempts to high adventure, we have read
Most vivid, valiant truths that might have led
From paths profane, if we, like you, O sage,
Had seen the way. But in this desperate stage
We darkly toil for bread and more than bread.
You speak to our condition and provoke
Heart-hunger and a longing for the free
Exchange of all our false ties for the true.
A voice! It was your stalwart spirit spoke:
"Oh, why not venture all for liberty?"
Great soul, a braver race must answer you!

YOU FOURIER FOLK!

YOU FOURIER FOLK!

God knows if you are right. I do not know;
Into futurity I may not peer.
You have fine faith, but O good friends, I fear
That Humor, pledge of sanity, has no
Secure place in you! Still, though this be so
You may work better things; the crude and drear
Condition which we see about us here
Perchance for you may take up staff and go.
But when, intrepids, you Altruria build
You must make man a something more than man.
Tear wealth in bits, apportion every shred?
But soon again hoard harbors will be filled
With spendings of unthrift, unless you can
Remold the weakling heart and scheming head.

UNDER THE OAKS WITH POE.

UNDER THE OAKS WITH POE.

To harrow me is your high purpose, Poe,
But birds are trilling from the boughs above
And through the leaves the sun sends beams of love,
Warm love to all the animate world. Ah, no!
Your leaves I turn as idly as winds blow
Those overhead. Your folk of Usher move
With pale intent, though with keen craft you strove
To set them strongly forth in grewsome show.
My friend! in this place plainly I perceive
What ails your fictive art: It never grew
In sun and rain. But still it brings no bane
To minds made hale by tonic airs. You grieve
No heart that reads old Nature's story true,
For ever frank *that* tale and ever sane.